

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-25 are pending in this application.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and receipt of the priority document.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Toshiyuki et al. (cited JP publication number 05-218847) in view of Mikami et al. (6,661,397B2). Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and claims 2 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form since each of these claims has been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 3-11 have claim 2 as a base claim and claim 13 depends from claim 12. Claim 14 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claims 1 and 2. New claims 15-23 are patterned after claims 3-11, respectively, and depend from claim 14 as a base claim. Further, new claims 24 and 25 are patterned after original claim 14 and have claim 12 as a base claim. Accordingly, claims 2-25 should be found to be allowable.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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JRM/so
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